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DAWN
ISLAND
A
TALE
BY H. MARTINEAU

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Drawn & Etch'd by J. Stephenson

DAWN ISLAND

DAWN ISLAND.

A Tale.

BY HARRIET MARTINEAU.

Written for the National Anti Corn Law Bazaar

May. 1845.

DAWN ISLAND.

A Tale.

BY HARRIET MARTINEAU.

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CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE.
1.	—Nature and Man at War	7
2.	—Puerile Man and his Gods	14
3.	—The Priest and the Oracle	25
4.	—More Human Sacrifice	32
5.	—Vital Tribute	38
6.	—The Priest and the Advent	48
7.	—A Higher Disclosure	62
8.	—Spiritual Tribute	74
9.	—Nature and Man at Peace	86

PREFACE.

This Tale, written for the purpose, is my offering to the Bazaar of the National Anti-Corn-Law League.

However small its value, this contribution is made by me without hesitation, because I think that earnestness of conviction on the principle of Free Trade,—as on any principle whatever,—is most effectually evinced and employed by every one working in his own way for the cause. The separate gifts of a thousand of us contributors may be of insignificant value in themselves; but, as evidence that a thousand minds, and a thousand pairs of hands have been at work on the ground of a common conviction, the testimony is not unimportant. For my share, therefore, I have written this Tale; and I shall be gratified by its being granted a place among a myriad of other avowals of interest in the cause of Free Trade.

H. MARTINEAU.

Birmingham, April, 1845.

CHAPTER I.

NATURE AND MAN AT WAR.

IF a voyager were to search through the world for an abode of peace, he would probably choose, for its outward aspect, one of the small tropical islands of the Pacific; and of the whole Archipelago, no one could present a more enticing appearance of tran-

quillity than that which was, while yet unknown to navigators, called by its inhabitants the Island of the Day Spring; or, as we should call it for shortness, Dawn Island. The lofty summits of the central mountains seemed to bring down to earth something of the unfathomable quietness of the tropical skies which overarched them. The transparency of the atmosphere gave an appearance of stability to every object within reach of the eye,—a clearness of outline, and firmness of position, hardly to be conceived of by inhabitants of regions where every thing is seen through shifting and refracting fogs and mists. The waving of the plumy foliage of the cocoa-nut grove, and the leap and gush of the mountain streams, rather lulled than disturbed the senses of the observer; and if he turned his gaze to the shores, he could not but think that the space between them and the coral reef which surrounded the island contained the stillest waters he had ever seen. The coral reef extended to various distances from the shore, now stretching out so as to enclose a lake-like expanse of two miles in breadth, and then bending inwards so as to leave

no more room than for two canoes to pass. To any gazer, looking down into the clear depths of these waters, all appeared even calmer than on the surface. Fathoms deep, he saw an apparent foliage and fruitage, delicate as vegetation itself—fragile-looking as the slenderest weeds, but giving way to no lapse of waters, and not stirred by the gliding of a throng of fishes, as the boughs of trees are by the flitting of birds. These many-coloured corals, sprouting and branching out from the sandy bottom, gave the idea of a luxuriant garden suddenly overflowed, and petrified by the deluge. The stillness of the land and waters within the reef was made more striking by the chafing of the ocean beyond. The long breakers rolled in, rising in height and force as if they would surmount the barrier, but clear and lovely as opal; and on the first encounter with the reef, their white crests were dispersed in showers of spray, which merely dimpled the smooth waters within, and sent a solemn sea music resounding through the nearer inland groves.

While such was the peaceful aspect of Dawn Island in ordinary times, there was one day in the

history of its inhabitants when all was disturbance, through its length and breadth. Wars were indeed frequent,—aggressive or defensive wars with the people of another island, or conflicts arising from rebellion at home. On the present occasion, an expedition, with the king for its leader, was going forth to put down an insurrection on the opposite point of the island, where a dismissed minister had gathered round him all the discontented, and was putting forth a claim to the regency of the island, on the deposition of the king,—the heir being still a child.

On the king's side, the preparations had been going forward for some days. The weapons were cleaned and pointed, and their handles smeared with resinous gum, to make them fast in the warriors' grasp; the god Oro was brought out from his temple, and a red feather solemnly taken from the image by the priests, and borne hither and thither with the army, as a symbol of Oro's presence and sanction; the fleet of canoes was assembled in the lagoon, and the altars were dressed in those which were to convey the symbols and sacrifices of the gods. While

the priests were preparing for the final ceremonial, and the king was holding a council under the deep shade of a bread-fruit tree, the orators were working up themselves and their hearers of the army into a state of high excitement, bidding the warriors to dart upon their enemies like a sheaf of lightning bolting from the clouds, to fasten upon them as barbed arrows on the flesh of the thigh, to overwhelm them as a waterspout advancing upon a fishing fleet, and finally to come home in triumph, to devour their chief foe as the shark swallows the strong man, when most secure in his strength. Some of the hearers were transported with the fervour of the oratory, casting glances of fire on their comrades, and uttering shouts of triumph. Of these comrades, however, some were of a different temperament, and others had their sobriety of mind preserved by the sight of their wives, who were hanging on the rear of the assemblage; or of their houses, which peeped out from the groves, or nestled in the meadows; and these remembered that the triumph was premature, and that, till the disposition of Oro was fully ascertained, no man could say with any assurance on

which side would be the victory, and on which the devastation. Among some of these soldiers arose a rumour of "Where is Miava? Who has seen Miava, on this day when he should have been seen by every one?" And this muttered inquiry was taken up and loudly echoed by the women, whose excited imaginations immediately caught the alarm. A panic spread lest old Miava should have gone over to the rebels, and carried Oro's favour with him. In haste and trepidation, numbers ran to see whether the presents brought for the priest were sufficient—whether the mats and the cloth were of a handsome quality, and so arranged as to please the old man's eye, and stimulate his zeal in propitiating the god. All was found satisfactory enough,—at least in the eyes of the priest next in rank, who gave notice that Miava had merely retired to the woods, for peace and quiet, till the war should be over. He was now weary of the wars of which he had seen so many; and he left it to younger men to deal expressly with the gods, and receive the reward of their prayers and watchings. As the fatigues and anxieties were left to his juniors, so were the mats and the cloth,

and even the canoe which he had heard was intended for him if he obtained a good response on the present occasion.

No one ventured to say a word in disparagement of the junior priests; but all were cast down by the absence of old Miava, who had for many years offered with his own hand the last human sacrifice, slain while the warriors stood, ready to start, with their arms in their hands. The king, who kept an eye on all that passed, from his station in the shade, marked the discouragement which fell upon the forces, and the cooling down of the orators, as their hearers turned their heads another way. He gravely observed to his council, "Miava must be brought down from the woods. By sunset, he must have his hand on the stem of the sacred tree."

"But if he will not come?" objected the chief minister.

"Then the war cannot proceed; and which of you will suffer that? Miava must come."

CHAPTER II.

PUERILE MAN AND HIS GODS.

At sunrise of this, as of every day, Miava had come out, to spend his hours in the wood or on the rocks. There was nothing in the abodes of any of the inhabitants of the island to tempt them to stay within,—no coolness, nor cleanliness, nor comfort. Holes in the roof let in the rain and mosquitoes; hollows in the earthen floor held stagnant water; the long grass with which the floor was strewed was never changed, and the food and drink dropped upon it rotted and fermented; so that the litter was presently fit only for a stye. There was no separate sleeping place; only the drier parts of the floor were chosen,—the parts near the walls, and there the mats were spread, and a low block of wood was placed for each head that desired the luxury of a pillow. Those who had pigs let them wallow in the midst; and those who had fowls let

them perch where they would. No wonder that Miava was out early, exchanging the grunt and cluck of his domestic stock for pleasanter out-door sounds, for the fall of the broad bright cascade which leaped the rocks near his hut, for the rustle and clatter of the long stiff leaves and light leaflets of the cocoa-nut trees which sprang from the crevices of the precipice at hand, and for the distant murmur of the sea.

As he came out, he glanced at the smaller hut which stood a little way behind his own. Women, being regarded as an inferior race, were provided with a sort of kennel, where they might eat their coarser and poorer food, and wait the bidding of the men of the family. They were required to cook for their masters at the superior oven provided for the better abode, to carry in the baskets of food and wait on the eaters, and at night to sleep in the most comfortless corner of the larger dwelling; but further than this they were not indulged. They must eat only when others had done, must not touch anything particularly good nor complain of anything particularly bad, must always be within

call, and wait standing, must not lie down at night till all the animals were asleep, and must, without fail, be busy at the oven before their masters awoke in the morning. So Miava glanced round at his daughter's kennel and at the ovens, and, not seeing her, ought, according to rule, to have been very angry.

But Miava was not wont to be angry; and least of all with Idya. Idya was not his own daughter; but had been adopted under circumstances which endeared her to him as much as if she were. She had been deserted in her early childhood,—her parents being both slain in war, and no one caring to nourish a helpless little creature of a sex not worthy to be offered in sacrifice, and of an age not ripe for cooking and beating fibre-cloth. So she would have perished on some rock or in some recess of the meadows, if Miava, who was of such dignity as to brave public opinion without detriment, had not connived at her continued existence, and tacitly taken some measures to secure it. He threw her some of the inferior sorts of fish which were brought to him in tribute, and did not inquire where she

broiled them. She once found in her sleeping hole a mallet for beating cloth,—a mallet which was not too heavy for her strength,—a clear permission to learn to make cloth, if she could induce any women to teach her. It was even reported that not only had some one provided her with a bark foot-sling, for climbing cocoa-nut trees, but that Miava himself was once caught showing her how to use it, and taking care that she did not fall in her first attempt. By some imperceptible means, Idya grew up to be useful, like other girls, and to be indulged as few other girls were. When, as on this morning, she was not abroad before her proprietor, he did not beat or scold her, but said to himself that he was probably astir earlier than usual, or that Idya looked prettier and pleasanter when she was awakened by the first sun ray or the early breeze, than when scared out of her sleep by a kick or a growl.

He first repaired to his morning station, a point of rock whence he could overlook in privacy the valley beneath, and a wide range of shore. There he forgot everything in the interest of watching the gathering of the forces, and the reception of the

king and his council. He was thankful to be on his quiet perch, rather than amidst the preparations,—for other reasons than he could freely avow. His mind was troubled by so much strife, and far more deeply troubled by being made, through his office, the abettor of strife. He had only followed custom and tradition in what he had done; but of late these had failed to sustain him completely,—to steel his heart against the cries of dying men, and to make him glory, for the sake of the gods, in sending the victim's right eye on a leaf for the king to pretend to eat. The slightest qualm of doubt as to the correctness of such proceedings spoiled all the complacency of them; and then again, there was the fear that any such qualm was an offence against the gods. He was glad that years and long service now afforded him an excuse before Oro and the king for being out of the affair altogether. And with this sense of relief he looked down this morning on the moving multitude.

As he watched, absorbed in thought, he was startled by a rustling in the bushes near, and next by the appearance of a woman whom he knew as

the inhabitant of one of the best abodes in the valley below. Her face was now convulsed with fear, and her dress was torn, as if with scrambling through the thickets. She strove to speak, in vain.

"Feito," said the priest, "your son is now a man; and he must go out with men to the battle. When he was dying under the sorcerer's curse, and you fetched me to save him, was it not your wish to see him a man among men on such a day as this?"

"It is my wish now," replied the sobbing mother; "but the best hope for him now is that he may be as a beast among the mountains."

"Is he tabooed?" quickly inquired Miava.

"He is,—and in him all of us. Many months since, he sent to the king only half the bread-fruit that was expected, though we kept too little for ourselves. Since then, I have lived in fear. My children said to me still when the new moon appeared, 'We are safe;' but they will say so no more. The chief of our valley received the token to find a victim last night. He accepted it. There is no other than my son fit for the sacrifice. We have fled thus far. Tell us where further to fly."

"Where is Motuaro? Gone up the mountain before you?"

"How could he pass the threshold of Idya?" said the mother, with a melancholy smile.

Miava sighed, as he quickly turned homewards, followed by Feito and her young daughter. He had seen with satisfaction, for some time past, that Motuaro loved Idya. He had hoped to see Idya the young man's wife: but now, if the family must leave their bread-fruit tree and their fishing boat, and be outcasts in the mountains, what could he wish?

As he expected, he found Idya in tears, yet not listening to her lover, but rather hastening from him to meet his mother, to whom she rushed with a wail of grief, as soon as she saw her. The young man, who was following closely and sadly, now turned back, saying,

"She does not love me. I will go and be the sacrifice, for no one else is so miserable."

"You will go to the mountain," said Miava, with a tone of authority. "You are young; the king will soon be old, and the taboo may be buried in his grave."

"The taboo is everywhere now," cried the mother in despair.

"I can show you a place where it cannot hurt you," said Miava, wrapping his garment about him, as if preparing to guide the fugitives.

During the moment of waiting, the ears of the mother, quickened by terror, caught the sound of voices from amidst the wood below. At a sign from her, all listened. It was certain that men were approaching. Not an instant was to be lost. Miava whispered to Idya,

"Lead Feito and her son up by the path of the torrent to the sorcerer's den. They must enter it without fear; but you must not set foot in it. You must at once return,—and by the other path. No one is in the cave, and nothing shall hurt them. They will find food there till I can show them how to find more."

At a sign from his hand, the party were gone.

Miava did not return to his station; for he desired to intercept the party who were ascending through the wood. As he leaned against the door-post of his hut, awaiting them, the thought that

more and more haunted his life settled down gloomily on his mind.

"'The forest-tree shall grow; the coral shall spread and branch out; but man shall cease.' If prophecy is true, this is the truest. My father walked through thirty peopled valleys; and his father through fifty. Of those fifty I have seen thirty desolate. Our young men die childless outcasts in the dens of the mountain; and our strong warriors go out and never return. Yes, the tree grows as lofty as ever; and the coral spreads in the sea as the convolvulus on the earth;"—and he looked from side to side, and could see no space between the trees where its bell-flowers did not sprinkle the grass;—"but man is fast dwindling, and will soon cease from our world. Too true is prophecy; and some fearful prophecies remain."

Here his meditation was interrupted by the messengers from the king, who came to beseech or require him to officiate in the sacrifice below. For some time he resisted. But when it appeared that the greater number of the party were on the point of being despatched in pursuit of a victim for sacri-

fice on the mountain, his concern for Motuaro and his mother, and his immediate power of saving them prevailed. He agreed to go on certain conditions;—that the deputation should, to a man, attend him, with such observances as he should prescribe; that he should select the victim; and that he should be the watcher in the temple at night for the response of Oro.

It was with a heavy heart that Miava slowly descended to the shore. The herald blew the trumpet-shell before him,—its harsh blast startling the birds from their hiding places in the trees; and a young priest in the rear beat the sacred drum, whose dreary sound spread fear of the taboo wherever it was heard.

"I had hoped," thought Miava, "never again to have spread fear through a race already doomed to cease. But by waiting on the god this once more, I may save a man. Yet, is it saving a man, when another must be chosen?" He put down this painful question by the remembrance, "This, however, is not my affair. It was within the memory of my fathers when the gods first required, by a dream, that

the highest gift—man himself—should be offered. I am glad I was not the dreamer; but there can be no doubt of the will of the gods. And it is good to be able to choose the sacrifice, and turn aside the vengeance of the king. And it may be that Oro will give no response to-night; and then the war must not proceed, and many will be spared. How the people fly from the trumpet and drum! But the gods must be served, or man will cease at once. Oro perhaps chooses one to save a multitude. At all events, we must entice him from going over to the rebels. And Motuaro is safe for this time."

CHAPTER III.

THE PRIEST AND THE ORACLE.

As soon as the assemblage on the shore perceived that the priest had come to the sacrifice, shouts of joy rent the air. The king did not conceal his exultation; and at his command, more presents were brought, and laid on the pile of the priests' offerings. Miava's heart was somewhat lightened. He unconsciously felt the reality that there must be in any observances which so deeply involved men's passions of hope and fear; and he was aware of the dignity there was in being the medium between them and the unseen powers. He approached the Aoa,—the sacred tree which none but priests could pass without trembling,—and looked up among its wilderness of boughs with a tranquil gaze. There hung two human bodies,—the sacrifices offered at the beginning of the war-gathering. These he ordered down, and caused to be enclosed in baskets

of cocoa-nut leaves, and slung up to the rafters of the temple, to leave the tree clear for the one remaining victim.

This tree, much resembling the banian, was as good an illustration as the vegetable world could furnish of the continuous being and self-diffusion of the deities worshipped in Dawn Island. Every branch sending down roots to the ground, and the sources of life being thus multiplied perpetually, it seemed as if the tree must live for ever. No man could ever learn from his fathers when this grove-like tree was a sapling; and it was now a firm and universal belief that a bird had brought some seeds from the moon, and had dropped one on Dawn Island in his flight.

While Miava, in examining the interior of the Aoa, retired out of sight beneath its pillar-like stems, the gazers little knew that he met his attendants under the shadow, to give orders fatal to one of themselves. He named the victim,—and in a few moments more the man was felled by a blow on the back of the head, as he stood on the outskirts of the crowd, jesting with a comrade. He was a young

man of turbulent temper and vicious habits, who could be spared better than most; yet his heavy fall, and the shrieks of his flying family, penetrated with horror all who saw and heard. Such spectacles might increase their awe and dread of the gods, and certainly lessened their feeling for the sufferings of men; but the natural anguish of the moment could not be extinguished by custom and familiarity.

The rites now went forward with order and speed. The chief victim was suspended from the tree; the hogs were slain and baked,—their heads placed upon the altars, and their flesh partly eaten by the priests. The messengers of the gods, rising in the shape of birds from out of the tree, on a burst of harsh music, were dismissed to the place of abode of the deities, somewhere near the foundation of the world, to announce and invite, in the usual terms:—"There is war in the world. Come up to the place of light, and help your worshippers."

Before evening, the red feathers, taken from Oro's very image, were deposited in the sacred canoes; and all was ready for starting at daybreak, if only

the response of the god in the night should be favourable. For its announcement, many waited with anxiety. The king himself lay on his mat before the gate of the temple; and his council watched on the steps which, on three sides, surrounded the inclosure. Miava was within,—he alone; and his station was in the innermost court. There stood the image of the god Oro, under a sort of wooden canopy. The rest of the court was open to the sky, but so walled round as that no eye could pry into the transactions of the priest and the oracle.

Miava was intently on the watch for a sign from the god. How it would come, he knew not; whether in the sighing of the breeze, or the piping of the night bird becoming articulate, or in a louder murmur of the waves, or by shooting stars flashing across the sky, (as meteors do in that climate,) or in a dream. After listening till his senses became confused, he lay down before the image, and looked up into the heavens, in order not to miss any token that might be manifested there. His sight was so dimmed by age that even the steady blazing stars of the tropical sky were to him blent in one hazy

light; but if Oro wished to communicate with him, he would send a flaming meteor sufficiently near to the earth. The uncertain waiting for such a sign, however, wearied his eyes, and he slept,—a broken and anxious sleep. He dreamed, or fancied, that a voice whispered to him,—he knew not whence,—"The forest-tree shall grow; the coral shall spread; but man shall cease." Anxious to be assured, he cried, "Again!" But his own voice roused him. He started up. Nothing seemed changed. The hideous image of Oro stared, immoveable as ever, and the sounds of the night were all that was heard.

Miava's heart interpreted the prophecy, recurring at such a moment, as a token that there must be more slaughter,—that the war must proceed. But he would not conclude hastily. The night was not half spent. If Oro, or a messenger spirit from him, had really entered the image, there would be something done to preclude doubt. For hours he waited. The breeze had died away; the piping bird had gone to roost; the heavens were calm. There was no further sign.

As the dawn broke, and objects within the court became more clear, he perceived that something hung from the neck of the idol which was not wont to be there,—the singing-shell used by sorcerers in their divinations. These shells, being never known to refuse to answer, were carefully monopolized by those who had a right to intercourse with the demon which each contained. Miava saw at once that Oro had sent his messenger to speak to him through this shell.

Reverently and anxiously he lifted the shell to his ear. It sang, of course;—and to Miava the murmur appeared to be an incessant repetition of the plaint, "Man shall cease." The shell dropped from his hand. He could no longer question the response. He took a red feather from the image, and held it aloft as he issued from the inner court. The first golden spark of the sun was just rising from the brim of the ocean when he came forth. The king started to his feet. The council all arose, and each man uncovered his head and shoulders, in devout expectation.

"The war must proceed," said Miava.

"Oro is with us?" inquired the king.

"He is not against us, for he has replied," said Miava, mournfully.

"A multitude will return home?" asked the king, struck by his tone.

"Many will not return," replied Miava, speaking to the royal ear alone. "All else is made to flourish, but man to war and perish. Forests arise, and see how the corals spread! But man must cease."

The king's heart sank as he heard the old prophecy,—now confirmed on the threshold of Oro's abode. He looked wistfully in the face of the priest, and walked in silence down to the shore where his canoe led the war-fleet.

CHAPTER IV.

MORE HUMAN SACRIFICE.

The war proceeded. Many indeed of those who went out never returned; but the destruction of the rebels was the most complete. Except the few who escaped to the recesses of the mountains, and a very few more who got off to sea through a perilous passage in the reef, none survived. Of the first, some soon perished from want, while others became in course of time wild men, forgetting language and such arts of life as they knew, and actually sinking lower than many brutes. Of the fugitives by sea, a small number reached Evening Island,—the only land visible from Dawn Island, and so far distant on the western horizon, that no one thought of reaching it, except in a struggle for life. The lot of the prisoners taken alive was the worst. They saw first the destruction of their forces and their cause. They saw their huts burned—the women

and children slain—their bread-fruit trees felled—the tops of their cocoa-nut trees cut off—total ruin overspreading their settlement. But, more than this, they had eaten their enemies after battle, and they knew that their own time was come. Theirs were not the feelings of disgust with which civilized men regard the act; but rather of a humiliation scarcely to be conceived of by any but a savage; for civilized men can never be absolute slaves to circumstance and event. They knew the passion of triumphant revenge under which they had swallowed the flesh of foes, and the exultation with which they had boasted of sharing with Oro his favourite feast. Now, they were to suffer, not only death by torture, but the contempt and malice of gods and men,—each in solitary despair.

The festival was indescribable. To Miava it was as tolerable in aspect as it could be to any one; for, as he saw in the idol Oro not a hideous image cut in wood, but a chosen form into which the war-god descended at will, so he saw in cannibalism a divine rite permitted to valiant men. The spirits of men were believed to be absorbed or imbibed by the dis-

embodied deities, to whom in consequence had ever belonged the title of "Man-eaters." When human sacrifices were offered, there was no doubt in the mind of a believing priest that the spirit of the victim was drawn out and appropriated by the god, as the plantain from its rind, or the milk of the cocoa-nut from the shell; and, as spirits thus fed upon spirits, it seemed a sharing of the privilege for body to devour body. Thus, even such an one as Miava had calmly taken his share of the feast of victory, and was able to meditate on the act on his way up through the woods to his home.

At home, he found a very different kind of entertainment going forward. Motuaro was there, pursuing his courtship of Idya in defiance of personal danger, and of the discouragement of Idya herself, and in neglect of the mother and sister he had left in the wilds. He could not keep out of sight of the poor girl, who wished him far away. He followed her wherever she went, put jessamine blossoms in her hair, and declared his love in words of passion; but the customs of his country and tribe rendered his courtship as laborious and irksome to

Idya, as it was unacceptable for other reasons. He never dreamed of not being waited on and provided for by her, as men always were by women. She had to go down to the shore for shell-fish, and even to cast a net for salmon. The leaves in which his food was to be baked must be plucked by her, the stones heated, the plantains gathered; and she must attend upon him during the meal. They were thus engaged,—Motuaro supping in the middle of the floor of the dwelling, and Idya attending on him, when Miava appeared in the door-way.

Idya sprang to meet him, telling him what was at the moment uppermost in her mind,—that she had been wishing that he had been home, that she longed to wait on *him* at his meal.

"Yet," he replied, "you cannot long serve me. As Motuaro's wife, you must soon serve him."

Motuaro sprang up in joy at hearing these words. But Idya replied,

"No,—I do not wish to be Motuaro's wife. I wish to live as we have lived; if only Motuaro would not leave his place of safety to follow me, when I do not desire to see him."

"I will find a place of safety for him and you," replied the priest. "I see that he will neither be safe, nor provide for his wants, nor give food to his mother in the mountain, while he follows you in vain. You must be his wife, Idya;—it is best; and you must."

Idya made no reply. The tears ran down her face the whole time she continued to serve the meal; and when it was done, she disappeared.

Miava then told the young man of the utter devastation of the other side of the island, and the undisturbed possession he might take of any spot there, while the district was supposed to be haunted by the demons who delight in such places. An incantation, such as Miava could supply, would protect any retreat from these demons; and a safe and thriving home might thus be secured for the family, in the very midst of a desolation which would forbid the approach of any one else. Miava promised to go himself in search of a place of abode, if the young man would immediately depart to his retreat in the mountains, and not return till the new moon, when he should receive his bride. Motuaro,

all joy and thanksgiving, engaged not to molest Idya by his presence before the marriage-day, and forthwith set out for the mountain, without attempting to take leave of the poor girl whom he now considered securely his own.

When Idya came, at her guardian's call, to hear the arrangement made, she turned away her face from him, that he might not see in the moonlight the traces of tears.

After relating to her the plans laid, Miava told her that she ought to rejoice in a prospect of married happiness so much more promising than was at all common. Not only did her lover woo her with a passion which was indisputable, but, from their mode of life, it was improbable that he would have more wives,—at least for a long time to come; and before that time, she might, by devotedness and prudence, have obtained an influence over him which would secure her a considerable amount of dignity and authority in the women's house, whoever might afterwards be the favourite.

Idya could at first only weep: but she soon timidly asked why she must marry, when she wished to stay and serve her guardian.

"You are growing old," she said. "If I go, you will grow cold and hungry, more and more;—and I——"

"That is the very reason," replied the priest. "I could not long give you a home. The cold and weary season of my perishing is at hand; and the young should be about their business and their pleasures. I had my time of youth and strength. Now my turn with the old men is come; and I must grow more weak and poor and comfortless, till I can live no longer. And your turn is come to be the young man's wife."

Idya did not dream of disputing this,—so fixed was the idea in all minds that the helpless, whether from age, sickness, or desertion, had arrived at their turn to perish. She therefore offered only a plea for herself. She represented that there might be some time yet before the feebleness of age came on; that Miava was not imperious and requiring as young men were; that she was now free from ill-usage and hardship; and that she had rather not bind herself to such toils and sufferings as a husband would inflict on her. She preferred the kind voice and contented temper of her guardian

to Motuaro's present love; and if he ceased to love her, he might be very tyrannical.

This was true, Miava admitted: but matters would be made worse by delay. To be a first wife was an opportunity not to be lost; and she must make no further objection.

Idya did make no further objection. At the next new moon, she was married to Motuaro, with such celebrations as the priest's influence could provide, without the affair coming to the knowledge of the king, or other enemies of the bridegroom, and without danger of the young people being tracked to their new and unsuspected home.

CHAPTER V.

VITAL TRIBUTE.

The home of the new-married pair was in a spot which united safety and beauty with healthy influences. Wherever, through the whole circumference of the island, a stream descended along a valley to the shore, there was an opening in the reef opposite the mouth of the valley and river, affording access to the open sea just where fresh water was in abundance. Where such openings occur may commonly be found islets at the point of the reef,—the soil brought down by the river, and the weed and drift wood washed up by the sea, being accumulated against the barrier, and rising at last to the height of some feet above the water, affording a favourable spot for seeds to germinate, for roots to bind the soil, and at length for trees and shrubs to supply a covert for birds and game. Such an islet was chosen by Miava for the abode of the young people,

—removed so far from the scene of battle as to be out of sight and reach of its effects, and yet so decidedly in the district of desolation as to be safe from the intrusion of any person on the other side of the island. The little green platform was not more than half a mile round. Three cocoa-nut trees rose in the midst; and a good deal of shrubbery afforded fuel at once, and promise of concealment in case of need.

In the dead of night, Motuaro ventured to the little cove, near his former home, where his canoe lay, and brought it round in the smooth water. It was not long before Idya had obtained enough of the fibres of the cocoa-nut tree to make nets, wherewith she procured fish for their support. Their abode was merely a hut of poles, set up between the three trees, wattled with twigs, thatched with cocoa-nut leaves, and the earthern floor strewn with dry grass. Their only luxuries were the beauties of the air, earth, and sea. These Motuaro continued to enjoy a good deal of; as he did little but bask on the shore, or bathe in the inlet. But Idya had no time or thought to spare from the business of

living,—poor as was the living obtained by her utmost care and industry. For months after her marriage, she rarely had news of her guardian. He was hardly strong enough now to make so distant an excursion;—she could not be spared from home; and she did not dream of asking her husband to take so long a walk to satisfy any anxiety of hers.

A season was at length approaching, in the prospect of which Idya earnestly desired to see the friend whom she loved best in the world. One evening, her husband found her resting on the ground,—apparently playing with the blossoms of the white convolvulus, which spread over the grass and the coral sands, down to the very edge of the water. Motuaro expected to find her at the oven, baking his supper; and he was not quite pleased. He asked her what she was thinking of, to be lying there. She replied, as she slowly rose, that she was wondering whether Miava knew that a child would soon be born to her.

Her husband asked if she felt afraid of being alone with him. If this had been a fourth child, which was to live, it would be necessary to have

some one with them, to take care of it. But he knew how to dispose of it, and ——

Idya said it was about that that she wished to see Miava. She supposed, however, that no mother would be right in preserving her first child.

"No; nor the second," her husband replied. Of course, she could have no time to attend to it, in their present way of life ;—that was what *he* had to say about it. Miava had other reasons to give, he believed, which would show it to be very irreligious and shocking to preserve a first child. Nobody did it, as she well knew.

Idya had lived so much in the woods, alone with her guardian, that she did not know much of what was done in society. She wished she had asked Miava about it ; for, she now would like to hear the reasons why her heart ought not to feel so sad.

Motuaro told her that he thought he would go up to the priest's dwelling, this very night. He had a reason. He had found a fine turtle ; and a turtle could not be eaten by any man without the sanction or participation of a priest. He would try to persuade Miava to come down, and eat the turtle with

him. She must immediately supply him with food to support him on the way; and, as soon as he was gone, she must bury the turtle in the sand, to await his return.

Idya obeyed with alacrity. She had no interest in the turtle,—no woman being permitted to taste food so much more worthy of men: but she would have undertaken any task for the chance of seeing Miava.

She saw him the next evening. When the meal of turtle was finished, and Motuaro dropped asleep, and she stood behind the priest on the moon-lit shore, she spoke with a beating heart the question that lay so heavily there. She supposed that Motuaro must destroy their infant, as soon as it should be born.

"Certainly," replied Miava. "Can you doubt it?"

Idya was silent.

"Motuaro said something to me of your having feelings different from other women," continued the old priest: "and you have lived very much out of their way. But, besides the custom, there are the reasons for the custom."

"What are they?" cried Idya eagerly. "Could I not carry my child on my shoulder while I am baking and making cloth, and let it lie in the canoe while I am fishing?"

"No," replied Miava. "Motuaro would not like it. But it would also be a disrespect to the gods. The brothers of Oro were bound to celibacy. Their followers were bidden to live and die childless. They could not let their children live. It is necessary that some of our children should be reared: but respect for the gods forbids that many should live; and among these, there must be no first-born."

Idya had nothing to say to this. It was some relief to her to hear that there were reasons extending beyond her husband and herself. Looking forward without hope, she felt but little grief at the time. She never heard the cry of her child, and did not know the moment when its new breath was stopped. The first time she raised her head from her mat, Miava showed her the exact place in the earthen floor where the infant had been trodden down, a few inches below the surface. Some fresh

grass was strewed over it; and on the precise spot did Motuaro many a day afterwards sit, to take his meals.

Miava thought he perceived that Idya, when she soon arose from her mat in order to bathe, avoided treading on that spot; and Idya thought she perceived that Miava watched, to see whether she did so or not.

She might be right; for Miava's mind was far from being at rest while haunted by the old prophecy. As he sat alone in the canoe that evening, apparently enjoying the lulling motion given by the ebb and flow of the waves through the opening in the reef, his meditations were not altogether as serene as his position and the scene before his eyes.

"The shark is a horrid foe," thought he; "and no year passes but a shriek is heard from the shore, and blood is seen upon the waters, because the shark is there.—The water-spout is very fearful; and in the stormy months, we know that some canoe or fleet is doomed to be engulphed, and the rowers to be seen no more.—War is more fatal than ten water-spouts or a hundred sharks.—But for ten

warriors there die a hundred infants. Those who are born should be more than those who die; but if every man has one or two living children, and many more dead, how are our valleys to be peopled again? and will not rather the twenty peopled valleys become two?" He looked up the valley, and marked the clumps and groves that bordered the stream. He then gazed down into the clear depths of the inlet, and sighed forth the too familiar words, "The forest-tree shall grow,—the coral shall spread,—but man shall cease."

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRIEST AND THE ADVENT.

When Idya bathed, she did it with all the energy and enjoyment of the women of her tribe, who, having few other pleasures and much fatigue, revel in this mode of refreshment. It was her delight to dive to the deepest hollow of the white sands, for any tempting object she perceived there; and to swim out through the opening in the reef, to sport with the breakers beyond.—One day, before the old priest had returned to his home, and when he was sleeping away among the shrubs the hottest hour of the day, Idya had thus gone out some way into the open sea, for the pleasure of being brought back by the tide, when, rising from a dive, she saw something more wonderful than all that the coral caves contained.

On wakening Miava, and as she stood beside him with dripping hair and her garment hastily

wrapped round her, she told him that she had seen a floating island, carried along by wings. At first she had thought it a very large bird, sent from the moon; but on looking again, she doubted about its being alive.

As she spoke, Miava looked extremely grave. He observed that there was an old prophecy which his father had desired him never to forget, or permit to be forgotten,—that some day a canoe without an out-rigger* would arrive from another world, and would be the cause of great changes.

"But this is not a canoe," objected Idya.

"Not like a canoe a hundred times larger than ours?"

"No. And besides, no canoe could hold men, or swim for a moment without an out-rigger."

"So said the people to the prophet, at the time. But he launched his wooden dish on a pool, and it floated; and he said it was thus that the great canoe would come."

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* An out-rigger is an appendage to a single canoe whereby its balance is preserved, and it is prevented from sinking when loaded.

"Let us climb the tree," said Idya, "and see whether the swimming island is in sight.—O! cannot you climb at all?—I will tell you what I see; but you will not believe me."

From the loftiest of the three trees, she saw very well what she wanted. But, after a while, she slid rapidly down the stem, being unable to endure the vision any longer. The vessel was coming nearer and nearer; and she had perceived that there were living and moving beings on board.

In silent consternation, she and Miava sat watching just within the verge of the shade. At length, Idya uttered a loud shriek, and even Miava hid his face in the grass for a minute, as an awful spectacle presented itself. A large and strange boat appeared in the opening, and it had no out-rigger! This boat held ten personages, who were rowing somewhat as men paddle; but Miava could not think they were men, from their appearance. At all events, they were not inhabitants of the world, as he told Idya,—imploring her not to shriek again, but to let the apparition pass by. The shriek had, however, been heard. The strange boat did not immediately stop,

but proceeded to the shore; but one of the rowers pointed out to his comrades something on the islet. Of course, the cowering pair thought they were perceived; and they shook in every fibre of their frames; but it might be only the roof of the hut, or the cocoa-nuts on the trees that were observed by the stranger.

"It is true;—the day is come!" exclaimed the old priest, as soon as he dared speak. "We have seen the out-riggerless canoe; and these visitors are people from behind the sky."

"They have faces," said Idya, whose eyes were better than the old man's. "They have faces; but they are almost as white as the sand; and in nothing else are they like men.—What shall we do? Shall we drown ourselves?"

"Not yet," said Miava. "We can still do that, if they prove too dreadful. And they may be messengers from the foundation of the world. We must wait."

They were nearly sick with waiting and expectation, when Motuaro appeared. He popped up his head from the smooth water, scrambled on

shore, and threw himself down beside the priest and Idya.

He had seen them,—seen more of the strangers than any one else yet. He had been fishing,—an exercise which he had had the grace to undertake while his wife was recovering her full strength. He was coming home with a good supply of fish,—singing at the top of his voice, and not looking behind him as he paddled, trusting to the accustomed solitude of the region, when he heard a shout from the shore. What a sight he beheld! There were several pale man-like beings splashing about in the shallow part of the stream, while two or three were on their knees higher up, drinking greedily. He rubbed his eyes; but the vision remained; and the appeal to his ears left no doubt. The strangers beckoned him to approach; and their gestures were so distinct that he dared not disobey. He slowly paddled towards them; but his terror was so great when two of the beings ran into the water to meet him, laid white hands on his canoe, and shouted at sight of the fish, that he threw himself over the stern, dived to the lowest depths, swam for home, and left

his property as a sacrifice to the people from behind the sky.

These strange people, meantime, when they had satisfied their thirst by bathing and drinking in the stream, looked about for fruit and other fresh food; but, within the range of their view, all was desolate. Nothing but rank and barren vegetation overspread the scene of the late war. The voyagers turned from the bare stems of the cocoa-nut trees, and the prostrate bread-fruit trunks, and from the naked rafters where fowls had once roosted, to look at the islet whence they had heard the shriek. Presently, their boat was nearing its little beach; and then Miava appeared from the shade, approaching to meet them. No other idea had entered his mind than that they were messengers of evil,—all the changes he had known in his life being for the worse. He therefore confronted them first,—partly that he might be their immediate victim, if necessary, rather than his young companions; and partly that he might try the power of spells upon personages so strange.

When he came near, he found that they were not

all white. One man, though in all other respects like the rest of the party, was of a complexion nearly as brown as Motuaro's. This man not only made signs of amity to the priest, but spoke so that his words were for the most part understood. He said that the white men came from another country, far away.

"From another world,—from behind the sky," replied Miava. "Have they a sun? or do they live in a region of night? They have the skins of those who live in darkness, but they have eyes given them for our sun."

"They live in our world, and our sun shines upon them when it leaves us," said the interpreter.

Miava looked to the east, and from that horizon to Evening Island he gazed slowly round, and shook his head.

"There are other islands, besides these two," declared the interpreter. "I come from one further towards the sunset than yonder island, and yet the sun sets still far to the west. The foundations of the world are further off than you know of; and these men live between you and those regions of

night. They not only live in the light of our sun, but they eat food as we do,—hogs, and fowls, and fruit."

The Europeans heard the familiar names of these last articles, and, supposing the conference had reached a practical point, now advanced, and holding out some unknown curiosities, repeated the words denoting hogs, fowls, fruit.

Miava looked from one to another in bewilderment. The sailors were not disposed to wait his time. One threw sticks at the cocoa-nuts on the trees, and brought down ripe and unripe at random. One cut a stalk of sugar-cane, and found it so delicious that others joined him. Two caught a hog, and put it into a sack, and then into the boat. They trusted to their commander's paying for what they took; but when he perceived how unused Miava was to barter, how unaware of the value of the articles produced, he stopped the proceedings.

First, he caused all the cocoa-nuts to be piled in one heap, and offered, through the interpreter, that Miava should select from his goods what he thought would pay for them. As it now indeed appeared

that the visitors were not messengers of evil, the priest was anxious to relieve his companions from their terror; and Motuaro and Idya came at his cheerful call. Of many articles offered, they could not at once perceive the value; but there were some which they coveted on the instant,—even before Miava could satisfy himself that they were not unhallowed. Above all, Idya, who spent many a weary hour in kindling and watching the fire of the oven, was struck and charmed by a little box whose contents would make fire in a moment. She considered it worth more than a whole grove of cocoa-nuts. But her husband thought quite as well of a pewter spoon, with which he saw a sailor helping himself to the juice out of a sugar-cane. Motuaro at once saw the use of this, and how it would aid him in his favourite occupation of feeding. The captain accommodated matters by giving the spoon in exchange for the canes. The hog then remained to be paid for.

Miava eagerly insisted on the choice of an equivalent being his: and it was granted on a cry of delight and admiration escaping from one usually

so composed. The captain had observed that the old man's sight had failed a good deal; and he placed first on his own nose, to show that they were harmless, and then on Miava's, a pair of spectacles. As soon as he could be persuaded to open his eyes, how great was his amazement! He saw distinctly the faces of all around him, and the leaves of distant trees, and the crests of the waves beyond the reef, and the blossoms of plants growing within the wood. He gazed around him, uttering new exclamations at every discovery of some long-lost object of sight, and then hurried away alone into the shrubbery, in the fear that some accident or quarrel might deprive him of his new treasure.

But what he saw during the daylight hours did not affect him nearly so much as the revelations of the night. When Idya had, with a beating heart, lighted a match to kindle the fuel of the oven, and Motuaro had supped, using his spoon for every mouthful, they were glad to sleep after the fatigues of so exciting a day. But the re-awakened sense of the old man would not permit sleep to approach him. As he cast his eyes upwards, trying whether

he could see anything at midnight, he saw, through a hole in the roof, a shining star. A starry night was one of the fairest pictures in his memory. Now it occurred to him that by this magic power he might enjoy it again. He rose hastily from his mat, and went out, escaping from the canopy of the trees to the open shore. There he remained for the succeeding hours,—hours which made him young again, not only in sensation, but in emotion and thought.

"Nothing is settled," thought he, "even to the oldest, to whom the young come as to oracles. News may arrive, even to our latest day; and what we knew and had forgotten comes again like news. No one could better tell once where particular stars were to be looked for than I; but there had so long been to me only a misty shine in the sky in summer nights that I had almost forgotten the sights that were behind it. And now the little yellow fires burn clearly,—so many that the gods themselves can hardly count them. What would Teoro think of them; he who has always been dim-eyed? I will seek him out, and try to make him

see them. But I know something of what he will feel, for I have this day been shown some wonderful things, about which I have been dim-eyed from my birth. I thought there had been no men but those like ourselves, all living in the islands of this wide sea; but I am told, and I must believe it, that very different men live somewhere in the world, —knowing our sun, being able to float and fish in our sea, and to drink water and eat flesh and fruit as we do. They must be men, because they did not draw out and devour our spirits, but chose rather to eat fish and a hog. Yet they must have to do with the gods, because they have magical powers, and can give them to us,—causing fire to come in a moment where there was none before, and making dim eyes old and young by turns. If there are such different kinds of men, how can I tell how many sorts there may be? And if there should be many kinds, how much longer will it take for man to cease? At first, before I knew these strangers to be men, I feared that they were sent to bring men to an end quickly; but now, if the world is so very large, and the same sun shines on so many

tribes, the end must be a good way off. The forest tree may raise its head till it reaches the cloud that hides the mountain-top,—the coral may spread out till it binds together all the islands of the sea, before man ceases altogether. Ah! but," pondered the old man, sinking from his mood of exultation to despondency, "though this may be true about the race altogether, may not our part of it be near perishing? Have I not seen it dwindle mournfully in my day? And who knows but these strangers may come to hasten the destruction! Yet no!" he considered, brightening again. "The strangers who were to arrive in an out-riggerless canoe were to cause remarkable changes; and it would be no change, but a sad continuation, if men were to dwindle till they cease. These predictions seem to contradict each other, as that about the wonderful canoe contradicted the knowledge of all men. Yet that one became clear. And these may become clear. If these pale strangers should ever appear again, I will ask whether men become fewer in other parts of the great world, and whether their trees grow tall and their corals spread wide. But I can

think of all this to-morrow; and to-morrow the stars will not be seen, and no one can look at the sun till evening. Ah ha! the moon is near the brim of the sea! Can she have waned so much? She looks as if she had but five nights left; but her light is strong on the waves, and I see them heave and sparkle as I never do when she is roundest. Can she be made young as my eyes are?"

This point might have been settled in a moment by Miava's looking at the vanishing moon under ordinary conditions; and this, of course, he was well aware of. But it was hard to part with his new enjoyment for a moment; and while he was considering about it, the moon dropped beneath the waves.

CHAPTER VII.

A HIGHER DISCLOSURE.

After this night of wondrous enjoyment, misfortune was in store for the old man. Having seen some of the beautiful things in which he had once delighted, he had a mind for more. He desired Idya to take him in the canoe to the clearest and smoothest part of the inlet, that he might gaze down, and once more see the branching corallines. In the midst of his pleasure, the spectacles fell from his nose into the water, and sank fathoms deep. Miava covered his face with a corner of his garment; for he was sorely grieved. Idya presently leaped into the water, and dived again and again; but it was some time before she could find the spectacles; and when she did, one glass was gone, and the other broken. Idya wept abundantly; and there were tears on the old man's cheeks as they drew to the shore.

There they found a fearful sort of consolation. The white men were come again; at least, their boat was riding in the cove. No one was visible but two men who had been left in charge of the boat, and who had found a pine-apple, a little way off, which they were busily eating,—supposing they had the beach all to themselves. Idya made a sign of silence to the priest, pushed her canoe behind some bushes, entered the water again, and swam to the ship's boat, whence she soon returned with a pair of spectacles, a spoon, and a box of matches.

Miava stroked her head, in sign of approbation of her skill, and, drawing back a good way from the water, put on his new spectacles. But where was the beneficent power gone? All objects were dim and confused,—worse than when he used only his own eyes.

He could not recover from his mortification and perplexity,—with which was mingled a fear of the displeasure of the god to whom he ought to have promised an offering before Idya did the deed,—Hiro, the god of thieves.

The Europeans landed, wholly unaware of the

loss of their property. They came prepared for barter on a somewhat larger scale, as well as to fill their water-casks from the springs on the shore. The captain was surprised at the depression of the old man, whom he had seen so dignified and self-possessed the day before; but Motuaro, who presented himself in a trice, was as energetic a customer as could be desired. The difficulty was that the islanders had scarcely any thing to exchange for the many articles they wished to have. The captain first, to their great joy, offered to pay them for the fish the sailors had taken the day before. For this, he gave Idya a piece of cloth which looked to her very curious and pretty. She wrapped it round her, and found it much lighter and easier than that which she herself had, with hard and protracted toil, beaten out of the fibres of trees. Motuaro saw at once the use of an axe, for which he gave a hog,—his last hog,—saying to himself that Idya must catch more fish, and he would try and find turtle. There were knives and scissors; and the young people saw how useful such things might be made; but they had nothing to give for them.

They promised to collect fruits and fowls, and to make some mats, if allowed a few days; but in their own minds they resolved to take what they wanted, in some sly way, from the boat.

When the whites were about to depart, Miava roused himself to use his present opportunity, and, approaching the interpreter, begged him to win over the captain to put the magic again into his spectacles, that he might once more see beautiful things with them.

The captain examined the spectacles, consulted with one of the sailors, and then bade the interpreter ask Miava how long he could see beautiful things with that instrument. He told eloquently what he had beheld yesterday and during the night, adding that he had lost his treasure in the sea this morning, and Idya had gone to the bottom to recover it.

"The lie and the theft may be the woman's," observed the captain to his men. "These are Dr. Symons's spectacles,—unfit for old eyes. He must have them back, of course; and we must come to an

understanding with these people. Get the old man to sit down, Turoa," he added to the interpreter, "and be sure you make him understand what I say."

The captain and Miava sat down opposite to one another on the grass, and the interpreter stood beside them,—the sailors being ordered to fall back out of hearing, and look well to the goods and the boat.

"You are a priest, Turoa tells me," the captain began; "and therefore you must be thought wiser than your neighbours."

Miava looked grave, and said that messengers came and went between the gods and the priests.

"And do not the gods permit men to make themselves comfortable by exchanging things with one another, as we have been doing to-day?"

"We grow fruit, and rear fowls and hogs, and catch fish, each for ourselves," replied Miava, "and when we send out warriors to plunder from our enemies, and bring home wealth, the god Hiro goes with them,—if we, the priests, can induce him."

"And then some of the wealth is brought to the priests?"

"Certainly. They have toil in praying and watching."

"And what does Hiro say when you take plunder from one another?"

Miava looked shocked, and said that was a crime for which men and women were sometimes punished with death. Against such, guard was kept. Large pieces of cloth were drawn up to the roof, where thieves could not get them; and small ones were laid beside the pillow every night; and the fowls and hogs were housed within the dwellings; and every body was against thieves, and they were always punished, when they could be caught.

"And if a pair of spectacles, like those, were stolen from my boat, would the thief be put to death?"

"Certainly not," replied Miava. "They would be taken from strangers; and there is no harm in that."

"The old fellow is in earnest," observed the captain, aside to a comrade: "but I must make him a little wiser, priest as he is.—Did your young

friend there find his canoe safe, after we were gone yesterday?" he inquired of Miava.

"Yes."

"And is he satisfied with what my men gave him for his fish?"

"Ask him."

"Why do you suppose we did not take the canoe and the fish without troubling ourselves to give any thing in return? We are strong men,—strong enough to carry away by force all that we wish for from this island."

"There are many warriors on the other side," declared Miava.

"Yes; but warriors cannot stand against thunderbolts; and we can blow thunder and lightning upon your people till they lie dead upon the ground, thicker than the skeletons we saw heaped together yonder."

"And," interposed Turoa, "they are struck dead by these thunderbolts before they have time to throw a spear. And, besides, the whites can do this from such a distance that no spear can reach them."

"Is this true?" asked Miava, bewildered.

"Quite true," said the captain: "but we do not wish to blow our thunder here,—unless you would like to see it."

Miava was quite satisfied with hearing of it.

"Well; why do you suppose we do not take all you have by force?"

"We might hide our things, and go away into the mountains in the night."

"Just so. We should not get what we want if we frightened you away, and spoiled your property. We wish to be friends with you; and for several reasons. We like to see people look cheerful and glad when we come among them. We like to supply you with things which make you comfortable and pleased; and we like to be able to come to your island, and get fresh water when we are thirsty, without putting any body into a fright, or having to hurt any one. But if you hurt us, we shall be angry perhaps; and if not, we must go and give our useful and wonderful things to some other people."

"We cannot hurt people who blow thunderbolts," humbly observed Miava.

"Yes, you can, though you cannot kill us. A wise man who is my friend cannot see the small plants on the ground, nor the leaves on the tall trees to-day, because you have got his spectacles,"—pointing to the pair held by Miava. The old man, in indistinct shame at the detection, and in an equally vague fear of seeing a thunderbolt issue from some one's mouth, hastened to surrender the spectacles. No one would receive them, as they belonged to no one present; but Dr. Symons was within hail, and he came gladly to recover his property.

"Now try these," said the captain to Miava, tendering him a pair like those of the day before. Again the old man's delight burst all his restraints of shyness and fear. He produced the frame of the unlucky pair brought up from among the corallines.

"Why did not you show me these before?" asked the captain. "You see I can help you. Now—what will you give me for these new ones?" Observing a glance pass between one of his comrades and another, he observed, "Ay, I would give him spectacles, and any thing else he had a mind to, with

all my heart; but don't you see, the best kindness I can do him and the people of the island is to teach them to trade,—and honestly? A few sugar-canes and hogs are cheap payment for the best lesson any one ever taught them."

The sailors agreed in this; but one could not resist adding to the value of the article by tying the spectacles on the old man's head with a piece of black ribbon out of his own private store. Miava promised any thing and every thing in his power, as the price of this purchase. In consideration of the accident by which he lost the first pair, a turtle, duly consecrated by him, was accepted in payment.

The captain then opened to the awakened mind of the old man a view of the comforts which would be at the command of the islanders, if they could trade. He showed him axes enough for half the householders in the region. He showed him clasp-knives, tin-bowls, looking-glasses, hammers, and nails, and promised to prove to him at night that he could make his dwelling light in the inside, while all was dark without. But he explained that many men had worked hard to make these wonderful

things, and that something that was wanted must be given in return, or there would be no encouragement to bring them. Both promised to consider well what the islanders could offer, or learn to provide, in exchange for such beneficial supplies.

For hours did Miava ponder this conversation. One of the practical conclusions he drew was of some importance.

"When neighbours in a valley can exchange things so as to please one another, there is cheerfulness, and none of the anger and danger that there are when men snatch or steal what they wish for, without considering whether the owner likes to part with the property. If these neighbours were always to consider each what he himself would like to be done to him, and do so to the other, there would be continual peace between them. And if all in the valley were to do the same, there would be peace from end to end. And if," he continued, brightening, "it were so through the whole island, there would be no more war. And if other kinds of men and ourselves were to do the same, there would be no terror, nor blowing of thunderbolts, and we

should have their wonderful gifts, and they would have our fresh fruits when they are thirsty, and our mats for a shade at noon. If every where men could so please one another as they would be pleased themselves, and there was peace, man would not cease for a long time yet. But then—" and his heart sank—"how could it be about the sacrificing of men to the gods? for no man likes to be sacrificed to Oro; and yet somebody must be devoted by the priests. I must think about this."

CHAPTER VIII.

SPIRITUAL TRIBUTE.

The strongest desire was excited in the minds of Miava and his companions to obtain more of the precious articles brought by the strangers. All the rest of that day, they consulted about raising the means of purchase. Idya was to work harder than she had ever done in her life before, and Motuaro himself promised to go fishing. Idya prepared to go to a marshy place at the foot of the mountains, to catch wild ducks,—a delicate process, about which she was very clever,—swimming softly and slowly, her head covered with a calabash, and thus approaching the birds unseen, and then pulling them quickly under the water by the feet, before they could give notice to their companions. She was also to take her sling, and bring down some wood pigeons. On receiving this last order, she looked grave.

Miava observed that these were all things to eat

and drink,—things that would soon disappear, and leave no trace for the foreigners to remember them by. If the strangers could carry something to their own country which people there would admire or could use, the captain might return, and bring more wonderful gifts to the island. Idya must go through the whole thicket, and see how many cotton shrubs there were, and what prospect of seed there was, that she might plant some, and raise cotton,—as the interpreter said was done in his island. And she might mark the sandal-wood trees for the captain to look at. Some of his men had talked of bringing axes on shore, Turoa had declared, to fell and carry away sandal-wood.

Idya made no reply but by a shudder till her husband had gone out,—which he presently did when there was talk of real work to be done. She then entreated Miava not to send her alone into the bushes, for she was afraid,—not of any man,—not of the gods,—but of her own babe. On the lagoon or the shore, she could look around her and fear nothing; but in the thickets, the spirit of her child appeared to be every where,—she could not escape

from the spectacle of it; and into the bushes she really dared not go.

Miava attempted to console her by saying that in this vision there was nothing uncommon. He named several women whom he knew to be thus haunted by their lost babes, till some of their offspring were allowed to live, when the liability usually ceased. A sinful thought here crossed his mind,—so shocking that he put it down,—that it was ungrateful and unkind of the gods to torment thus the mothers who showed respect to their celibacy, while, if the same women indulged their own natural affections, they would not be afraid in the thickets, or any where else.

Miava's compassion for his young daughter made him wish, as he said, that Motuaro would undertake that part of their business which she shrank from; but, while thieving from strangers was considered an innocent act, there was no chance of men being roused from their indolence to honest industry. Motuaro was now swimming off to the ship, hoping to bring away some booty from the boat, or by a sly and adventurous visit on board.

He swam round once, unperceived, and he found something so desirable in the course of that circuit, that he had no immediate wish to look further. The ship's flag was hanging so low as to touch the water. Its gay colours and wonderful fabric attracted Motuaro's cupidity, and he seized it, and had nearly cut away half of it when a shout from on board warned him to retreat. He had, of course, no idea of the sacredness of a flag. The captain knew this, and thought the present a proper opportunity for duly impressing the islanders with a sense of it. He ordered guns to be fired after the swimmer,—taking care that the aim should not be at him, but at the cocoa-nut trees which overshadowed his dwelling.

The middle tree rocked and fell with a crash which terrified Miava and Idya as thoroughly as the captain intended. Idya could see the men on board stoop to the guns, as they took aim, and then send forth flame, noise, and destruction.

"They are blowing thunderbolts!" she and Miava exclaimed at the same moment.

They next saw that Motuaro was swimming

homewards at his utmost speed, and for a moment they wondered that he had been spared. But it was only for a moment. He shrieked out, "The shark!"—leaped half out of the water with a cry of agony, and then disappeared amidst the wide stain of his own blood, which dyed the breakers and the lagoon to the very shore.

The captain was concerned,—not doubting that a shot had unintentionally reached the thief. He sent out a boat to pick up the victim, whose mangled remains showed at a glance what had been the manner of his death.

That night, the captain stood, with Miava and the interpreter, beside the bier, on which the dead man was placed in a sitting posture, his ghastly face appearing above the coverings which hid the rest of the body. No countenance and manner could be less formidable to most people than those of the captain; but Miava regarded him with a painful awe. One cause of this was that the captain had fulfilled his promise of making a dwelling light within, while all was darkness without. He had caused the shed (to which one end of the dwelling

was now reduced by the fall of the tree) to be lighted up with lamps,—a spectacle perfectly new in the island. The unwholesome floor had also been swept out, and strewn thick with white coral sand, which seemed to glitter in the lamp light.

"Tell me," said Miava, solemnly, "are the sharks your messengers? The blue sharks are the messengers of our gods; and you come from near their region of night. If the sharks are your servants, tell me so."

"They are not," replied the captain, with a convincing seriousness. "I did not desire this man's death. If I had, I could have struck him dead in a moment, as I knocked down your tall tree. I wished him to live, and remember that he must not steal from foreigners,—and particularly that he must not touch their sacred things."

Turoa here conveyed to the priest some idea of how and why national flags were tabooed; and Miava promised to teach the king and his subjects so distinctly that there could be no mistake, that no one of them could lay hands on this token of world-wide citizenship, and hope to live. When Miava

heard that no men on earth need ever hope to buy it,—that no captain would ever sell it for the wealth of the whole world, he was so deeply impressed as to wonder no longer that the gods had taken up the cause of the white men, and had sent a shark to destroy Motuaro.

He timidly inquired whether, in the country of the flag, Motuaro's widow and family would be tabooed. He was relieved and surprised by the answer that individuals were answerable for their own sins, and that Idya would be pitied and aided, —she being innocent of all offence.

"Then," he exclaimed, "you will not cause her to be tabooed here."

"Certainly not. Show me how I can serve her, and I will prove to you how we think on these matters. Where and how will she live?"

"Where and how would you wish her to live?" asked Miava submissively,—affording an opportunity for a lesson which the captain did not throw away.

"What person in the world does she love best?"

"She loves no one but me."

"What? has she no child?"

That sad story was soon told; and the mournful impression it made on the captain struck Miava forcibly.

"Did she love her husband?"

"No," replied Miava tranquilly. "It was necessary that she should marry him; but she loved only me, her father."

"Then we need not be so sorry for her, after all," said the captain, "except indeed about her babe. If that infant had lived, she would have had some one to love besides you,—some one to care for after you are dead. And you would have had that little one to play about your knees as you sit in the shade, and lead you about when you grow more blind. And you let that child be murdered!"

"You are displeased now," pleaded Miava; "and the gods, and the priests, and the king, would have been angry if the child had lived."

"How do you know that your gods would have been angry?"

"They would have sent misfortunes on Idya and all of us, if we had let a first-born child live?"

"Have you ever tried? I will answer for it there are many mothers willing to try whether it is really so, if you would let them have their way. Would not Idya herself, if you had not overborne her?"

"She would. But to show this disrespect to the gods!—who could dare to permit it?"

The captain quietly said that he doubted whether the gods were satisfied with things as they were. He would show respect to them in a different way.

With extreme eagerness, Miava inquired his meaning, saying,

"You come from near the foundations of the world. You may know more of these things than we do. How may we best show respect to the gods?"

"Do they show your people any lasting favour now?" asked the captain. "If I saw yonder valley full of happy families, I should think you had found a way to please your gods; but I see it desolate and spread with skeletons. I look for husbands and wives who love each other, and carry their infants in their arms; and here I find a widow who cannot mourn that her husband is dead in his

prime, and who dares not go among the bushes lest she should be haunted by the murdered child who ought now to be asleep upon her bosom. What is plainer than that she is punished by the gods for some dreadful mistake? If such is the state of things on the other side of your island, I should say that the gods are so displeased that it would be wise in you to try a new and a better way."

"There is an old prophecy which sounds in my mind in every place at all times," said Miava. And he mournfully repeated the familiar words.

"Why, there is a plain warning for you!" exclaimed the captain. "Your men must cease while you have wars, and murders at the altars and at the birth of infants. If the forest-tree and the coral are not good enough to offer to the gods, and man alone is so, surely he is too good to perish out of the world while forest-trees and corals are growing.—Ah! I see your difficulty. You think the gods must have the best of created things devoted to them; and so do I."

"You do?"

"Yes; but in a very different way from yours. If

you knew the gods to have one wish stronger than any other, would you not think it most respectful to observe it? Well! all that we know the gods to have made and done shows to my mind that they intend men to grow and ripen, like the fruit on the trees, and not to fall till it is fully ripe. If you planted a tree, and children and foolish people plucked and threw away the fruit,—some as soon as it showed itself, and the rest before it was ripe,—would you not be displeased, and leave the tree to perish?"

"I would taboo the fruit," observed Miava.

"That is right," said the captain. "I wish you would taboo men's lives. That would be the best respect to the gods, who made men live."

The priest covered his face in the agitation caused by this suggestion of a vast idea. The captain quietly left him, beckoning to Turoa to follow him.

"Taboo the life of man!" thought Miava, as he stood alone beside the bier. "What then would be the tribute paid to the gods? Would it not still be the spirits of men,—of living instead of dead men? If the gods had rather that the spirits of men

should ripen and multiply, and be full of wisdom and joy before they go to them in the region of night, no wonder they are displeased at the number of immature and unhappy wretches that we have offered to them! No wonder priests are haunted by the warning that man shall cease! My spirit is heavy and sad; for their displeasure is terrible. But if we can learn a better way, the anger and the curse may be withdrawn, and man may again increase. True was the prophecy, that the out-riggerless canoe should bring about great changes in our world!"

CHAPTER IX.

NATURE AND MAN AT PEACE.

The captain was not sorry that it suited his purposes to move round to the peopled side of the island, for he saw how the germs of civilization which he and his traffic had planted in this new soil might be fostered by his appearing before the king and his subjects as the friend of the influential old priest. The funeral of Motuaro taking place necessarily the next day, the body was conveyed round by the widow and Miava in their canoe, a short time before the ship left her station.

A great number of eager inquirers were assembled round the body, and the king had assured himself that his tabooed subject was beyond the reach of his wrath, when the attention of all was called away by the spectacle of the vessel, so many times larger than any they had ever seen, coming round the point. Miava's explanations of this

vessel being the one indicated in the old prophecy fell upon excited minds; and all who heard were ready to obey his directions to prepare for barter.

The exchanges of food and foreign goods were carried on with more order than is usual on the first occasion of a newly-discovered people being one of the parties; and when even the most fortunate sellers found that, much as they had gained, there were many other desirable things which they could not have till they could offer commodities less perishable and more valuable than food, it was not difficult to bring them to a purpose of preparation for a better traffic, if the Europeans would promise to come again. Those who had axes engaged to furnish sandal-wood; and others, enamoured of cotton and linen cloths, and being assured that they, by industry, could produce the cotton and flax needed for such fabrics, began to inquire how they could be instructed in the art of growing them. Matting and cordage they could soon supply, to a small amount; and tortoise-shell could be added, when its European value was known. It was only the comprehensive mind of the old priest which

could grasp at once all these details, and take in the prospect opened by the advent of Commerce in his world. For him it was almost too much. His breast heaved, as he put the question to the captain,

"What shall I offer to our gods when I send messengers to tell them that the out-riggerless canoe has come?"

"Lay before them," said the captain seriously, "an axe, and a knife, and a looking-glass, and a garment of cotton. These good things come out of the spirits of men; and they will please the gods till they themselves send natural death to bring the spirits of men to them, when all the work is done that they can do in your world."

The king understood Turoa's words of interpretation, and looked confounded.

"No more sacrifices of men!" he cried.

"No more," said the captain emphatically, "unless you wish to offend the gods who send you, by that vessel, the changes foretold long ago."

"But how shall I deal with my disobedient subjects?" asked the king, innocently, "if I cannot rid

myself of them, and keep them in fear by the sacrifice?"

"The gods will show favour very soon, and make your world happier, and your subjects more contented, and better able to pay tribute than ever before; so that there will be less need to make them afraid. And men will increase; and the more men the more tribute."

"Men will increase?"

"Yes; as surely as the forest-tree rises, and as fast as the coral branches out over the sands of the sea. But not unless you make one great change which you have never yet been told."

"Tell us now," cried the king and priest in a breath.

"I have told you that the gods will henceforth have what the spirits of men can make and do, rather than the spirits themselves; men's works and men's thoughts, rather than their bodies in sacrifice. Do you hear me?"

"Yes. Tell us the other great change."

"No one knows when the spirits of men begin to work, or when they leave off; or whether they work

best when their bodies are weak, or when they are strong. Every human creature that has a spirit in him must therefore be taken care of, and kept alive as long as possible, that his spirit may do all it can in the world."

"How many spirits have we sent away too early!" exclaimed Miava.

"That was before these changes," said the captain. "When you try the new ways that are now to begin, you will find how the spirits of old men speak wise things, and how the spirits of little children promise what they will do as men,—just as the day-spring promises what the noon will be. And then your old men, and your blind and sick people will not be left to perish because they are weak; and no more infants will be destroyed."

"But what can our women do, with so many children?"

"In our country," the captain began——

"That is near the foundation of the world;—he comes from nearer the gods than we are," the priest solemnly reminded the king.

"In my country," pursued the captain, "we men

do differently from you, because we love our children, and do whatever we are permitted to keep them alive. We ourselves get food and build houses and obtain clothes. Our women make the clothes, and keep the houses clean, and cook the food, and take care of the children."

"And must we do as you do ?"

"You will do it because you like it, when once you let your infants live to show that they have spirits. If a husband and a wife smile, like those people there,"—pointing to a man and woman who were amused at their child's gambols,—"if one child makes them smile so, think how their spirits would laugh if all that they have destroyed were at play beside them! When every dwelling has such laughter in it, you will know that the gods are favourable, and that man will not cease."

His hearers being absorbed in the contemplation of these wondrous changes, their instructor, whom they now regarded as a messenger from the gods, gravely asked,

"Where is the mother of that dead man ?"

Miava looked doubtfully at the king.

"Speak," said the king.

"But the taboo!"

"She must not be hurt," declared the captain. "The taboo is to be buried in her son's grave."

"Then Motuaro's dwelling, yonder, in the valley ——" said the priest.

"Is for her and for Idya to live in, and for you, Miava, if you will, that all may see that the taboo is taken off, and that the old and the feeble are to be taken care of, for their spirits' sake. If you are willing," he continued, turning to the king, "I will fix a sign on the house which shall make all men know and remember."

The king having nothing to object, a white flag was presently fixed on the roof of Motuaro's dwelling, marking it at once for safety, and as the abode of the old priest.

That done, the captain and his people took leave of the king and priest with parting presents, and promises of further intercourse, either in their own persons or by other messengers from the uttermost parts of the world.

Groups were assembled on every headland, and

the tallest trees were occupied by men to watch the sailing away of the mighty vessel.

"It has left behind the will of the gods," thought Miava, "and great gifts from them. I too, whose eyes were so dim, can see it depart as the young men do. We know now of such changes as were never told to men before since our world was made; and when these messengers come again, they will perhaps show us more. But they have told us the greatest news,—that man shall not now cease. That curse is taken off."

"You were like a preacher or a prophet to these poor people," observed Dr. Symons to the captain, as they stood on deck, watching the receding shores of the beautiful island. "Were my spectacles your text? If so, they are highly honoured."

"Every thing is honoured, be it what it may," replied the captain, "which is an instrument for introducing the principles and incitements of civilization among a puerile people. Yes,—I was their preacher and prophet just now;—and without affectation,—without any hypocrisy. I thought of

nothing less, when I landed, than giving such a discourse; but it warmed my heart and filled my head to see how these children of nature were clearly destined to be carried on some way towards becoming men and Christians by my bringing Commerce to their shores."

THE END.

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